

UTICA UNITED RECOVERY PLAN

Village of North Utica, IL
July 2004



UTICA UNITED RECOVERY PLAN

Village of North Utica, IL
July 2004

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20472



FEMA

Federal Emergency Management Agency Region V – Chicago

536 South Clark Street, 6th Floor
Chicago, IL 60605

FEMA Headquarters

500 C Street, SW
Washington, DC 20472



The Front Cover image is a computer simulation intended to give a general conceptual impression of what a rebuilt Utica could look like. For comparison purposes, the photo on this page shows how Utica looked in June 2004 approximately two months after the tornado.

The Utica United Recovery Plan

July 2004

In the pages that follow, you will find Utica's community vision for rebuilding in the aftermath of the April 20, 2004 tornado, which caused widespread destruction and claimed the lives of eight local residents. Responding to the severe impacts of the tornado, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) instituted a Sustainable Recovery Initiative designed to provide an extra measure of support for Utica's recovery effort.

The Utica United Recovery Plan is the product of a highly intensive four-week process involving a multitude of meetings between the FEMA Sustainable Recovery Team and local officials, business owners, civic groups and citizens. Hundreds of your neighbors either turned out for our public meetings or stopped by the Sustainable Recovery Office to share their ideas on how to rebuild Utica. In addition, the Rough Draft version of this plan was hand-delivered to every home and business in Utica, and 115 comment sheets were returned in less than a week, providing an invaluable source of feedback used to refine and prioritize the projects.

Utica was a special place before the disaster, and that has not changed. Your unshakable community spirit, and your resolve to build back better and safer, will continue to serve you well as you move forward with implementation of this plan. At the heart of the Utica United Recovery Plan is a simple guiding principle – keep the things that have always made Utica a great place to live, work and own a business, and then suggest ways to build upon the strengths of the community in order to make it even more prosperous, appealing, and livable.

Within this Recovery Plan, you will find 21 projects that form the foundation of a revitalized Utica. These projects are divided into three categories based upon their "Recovery Value": High, Moderate, and

Community Interest. The High Value recovery projects are the most urgently needed and all available resources should be focused on immediate implementation. The Moderate Value projects, although not essential to recovery, are likely to produce substantial benefits for the community, and should be pursued as time and funding permit over the next few years. And the Community Interest projects are those that are of relatively less significance, but are still probably worthy of more discussion and thoughtful consideration as recovery proceeds.



Unlike a traditional planning document that presents general guidance to a community, this Recovery Plan is an action-oriented menu of key projects intended to be used for making critical funding and resource allocation decisions. In addition to the projects, you will find letters of support from federal, state and local officials who have been steadfast advocates for Utica's recovery effort, and are now encouraging funding agencies to assist to the maximum extent possible. Also included are cost estimates for each project, based upon the best available information at this time; however, in most cases only preliminary engineering work has been accomplished, so considerable contingency allowances have been built in. Each of the

total project costs shown in this plan is backed up by a detailed cost estimate, which is on file at Village Hall and with the Village Engineer.

Now that the Recovery Plan has been completed, the challenge is to find funding for the key projects. As we have discussed from the outset, the FEMA Sustainable Recovery Initiative does not come with a dedicated funding source, so we must rely on our partners in the federal and state governments to help. Since most of the major government agencies have actively participated throughout this planning process, and have expressed a strong willingness to aid Utica, there is much reason for optimism as recovery advances. It is important to remember that not all projects are of equal importance, and not all need to be initiated simultaneously. Recovery from a disaster of this scale is a process, not an event, and it will continue for several years; although, as funding is committed to the first few high priority projects, progress in Utica will become evident in a relatively short time period. Based upon our experience on similar recovery projects, Utica can expect to see a significant amount of activity during the first year post-disaster, and then gradually transition into a more normal growth and development pattern.

One of the first things that we talked about is how disasters create opportunities, and now with the Recovery Plan in-place, Utica is well positioned to take full advantage of the chance to rebuild a more vibrant community. Always remember that "Utica United" is one of your recovery slogans, and is vital to your ultimate success – you cannot expect to be unanimous in all your decisions, nor should you necessarily agree with everything that is proposed, but you should stay united as a community and do your best to maintain a common vision for the future of Utica.



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
SPRINGFIELD 62706

ROD BLAGOJEVICH
GOVERNOR

July 15, 2004

Mayor Esmond
Village Trustees
Township Trustees
Citizens of North Utica

Dear Local Officials and Citizens of North Utica:

It has been nearly three months since a devastating tornado struck the Village of Utica, severely disrupting the lives of the people who live and work there. At that time, the State of Illinois' emergency response agencies moved swiftly to assist in rescue, debris removal, security, and restoration of essential services. Now the emergency clean-up effort is complete, but there still remains the long process of rebuilding and repairing businesses, homes and public property. I want to assure you that the State will continue to offer assistance as you work to recover and rebuild.

This rebuilding effort, while painful and difficult, does present some opportunities for the Village of Utica. Local officials are already considering the best way to approach a long-term recovery plan. To succeed, that plan must involve all levels of government, as well as local businesses, private organizations and, most importantly, the citizens of Utica. Together, you have a great opportunity to develop a vision of your community's future, and to create a comprehensive plan to make that vision a reality.

To help the Village develop the *Utica United Recovery Plan*, an Illinois Long-Term Recovery Team – representing the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Illinois Emergency Management Agency, Illinois Department of Transportation, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Agency and other agencies – is working closely with the Federal Emergency Management Agency

I strongly endorse this effort. I have directed the participating agencies to identify potential sources of funding to implement and complete projects proposed in the plan. I commend you and the citizens of Utica for the dedication and willingness you have demonstrated by working together through this difficult time, and I look forward to working with you as the long-term recovery effort gets under way.

Sincerely,

Rod Blagojevich
Governor

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20472



FEMA

July 8, 2004

Mayor Fred Esmond, Village Board of Trustees, Citizens of Utica;

I commend you on the remarkable progress that you have made in your recovery from the devastating tornadoes that occurred in April. Since my visit to Illinois in the days immediately following the disaster, I have received regular updates on your efforts to clean up and start the rebuilding process. In turn, I provide progress briefings to President Bush and Secretary Ridge on your recovery. It is encouraging to witness a community pulling together with strength and determination of its residents as you have done.

As you know, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) initiated a Sustainable Recovery program for Utica in early June. This is the first time that Homeland Security through FEMA has implemented a Sustainable Recovery effort in Illinois. The Utica United Recovery Plan is one of only five other like-projects in the country.

Since early June, a team of technical experts has worked with you to help develop a vision for the redevelopment of your community. FEMA has delivered the final Utica United Recovery Plan as a guide for rebuilding. As part of this process, FEMA will provide a local recovery manager for the next year to support you in the implementation of the key projects identified in the plan.

Now is the time for you to move forward in shaping the new Utica. The process will take time and will require a significant commitment of your collective energies, as well as substantial resources. Be assured that Homeland Security through FEMA will continue to be there and will assist by coordinating the numerous federal agencies that stand ready to help you, and by working in partnership with the State of Illinois to coordinate state agencies.

I wish you the best of success in your recovery and look forward to visiting Utica as the rebuilding progresses.

Sincerely,

Michael D. Brown
Under Secretary
Emergency Preparedness and Response

www.fema.gov

RICHARD J. DURBIN
ILLINOIS
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
COMMITTEE ON
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE
ASSISTANT DEMOCRATIC
FLOOR LEADER

United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510-1304

July 8, 2004

332 DIRKSEN SENATE OFFICE BLDG.
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1304
(202) 224-2152
TTY (202) 224-8180
230 SOUTH DEARBORN, 38TH FL.
CHICAGO, IL 60604
(312) 353-4952
525 SOUTH EIGHTH STREET
SPRINGFIELD, IL 62703
(217) 492-4062
701 NORTH COURT STREET
MARION, IL 62959
(618) 998-8812
www.senate.gov/~durbin

Mayor Fred Esmond
Village of North Utica
255 Mill St.
P.O. Box 188
Utica, IL 61373

Dear Mayor Esmond:

I would like to commend the citizens of Utica and LaSalle County for their remarkable recovery from the devastating tornadoes in April 2004. I continue to be inspired by how quickly your community came together to support one another and rebuild the historic Village of North Utica. I also extend my sincere gratitude to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the State of Illinois and countless service and volunteer agencies for their tireless dedication to the Utica community.

I know the community, under the direction of FEMA, is developing a Utica United Sustainable Long-Term Recovery Plan to provide a collective vision for the redevelopment of Utica. I would like to offer my complete support for this plan and all efforts to make it a reality. I encourage other federal agencies to join in this collaborative effort and, if possible, provide financial assistance for the priority projects outlined in FEMA's recovery plan.

I will continue to support this project and work closely with local leaders as you execute the Utica United Sustainable Long-Term Recovery Plan. Please feel free to contact my Springfield office if I can assist in any way.

Very truly yours,



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator

RJD/sn



United States Senate
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

PETER G. FITZGERALD
ILLINOIS

July 14, 2004

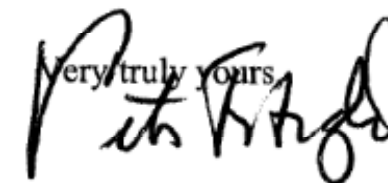
Dear Mayor Esmond:

I would like to take this opportunity to commend the residents of Utica. Despite the challenges of the last few months, your community has held strong in its resolve to rebuild the city and move forward.

As you and the residents of Utica rebuild the city, I applaud your continued work with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to implement a United Recovery Plan. This plan is a step in the right direction to reverse the destruction that occurred in April.

Financing from several federal agencies will play a key role in the implementation of the United Recovery Plan and will greatly benefit Utica and its residents. I offer my full support to your efforts.

Again, I commend you for your hard work. Please feel free to contact me or my Northern Illinois district director, Jason Anderson, at (815) 288-3140 if you need further assistance.

Very truly yours,


The Honorable Fred Esmond
Village of Utica
305 Florence Drive
Utica, Illinois 61373

PGF/lea

JERRY WELLER
11TH DISTRICT, ILLINOIS

COMMITTEE ON
WAYS AND MEANS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
SELECT REVENUE MEASURES



UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

July 2, 2004

DEPUTY MAJORITY WHIP

HOUSE POLICY COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE ON
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
WESTERN HEMISPHERE

The Honorable Fred Esmond
Mayor – Village of North Utica
305 Florence Drive
Utica, Illinois 61373

Dear Mayor Esmond:

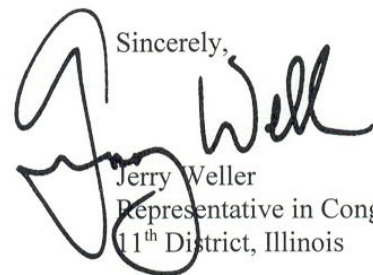
During my speech at the Utica Memorial Service in late April, I stated my belief that the Village of Utica would rise above the tornado tragedy and ultimately be a better place to live, work and raise a family. I cannot tell you just how pleased I am to see this prediction quickly coming true.

Thanks to your strong leadership and the “can do” spirit of the citizens of Utica, your historic community will soon be a special place with strong public service resources and a vibrant and productive local economy.

I also want to commend the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Long-Term Recovery Team for working so closely with the citizens of the Village of Utica in producing the Sustainable Long-Term Recovery Plan. I have reviewed this document and find it to be an outstanding prioritization of the critical steps needed to take the Village of Utica well beyond simple recovery.

With this in mind, I want to use this opportunity to strongly encourage the appropriate federal and State of Illinois agencies to utilize all available resources to assist the Village of Utica implement its Recovery Plan. Whenever possible, I plan to be personally involved in helping Utica work with these agencies.

Again, Mayor Esmond, let me thank you for your leadership and tremendous commitment of time and energy to the cause of rebuilding and strengthening your community. I know you will be successful. Please be sure to let me know whenever I can be of any service.

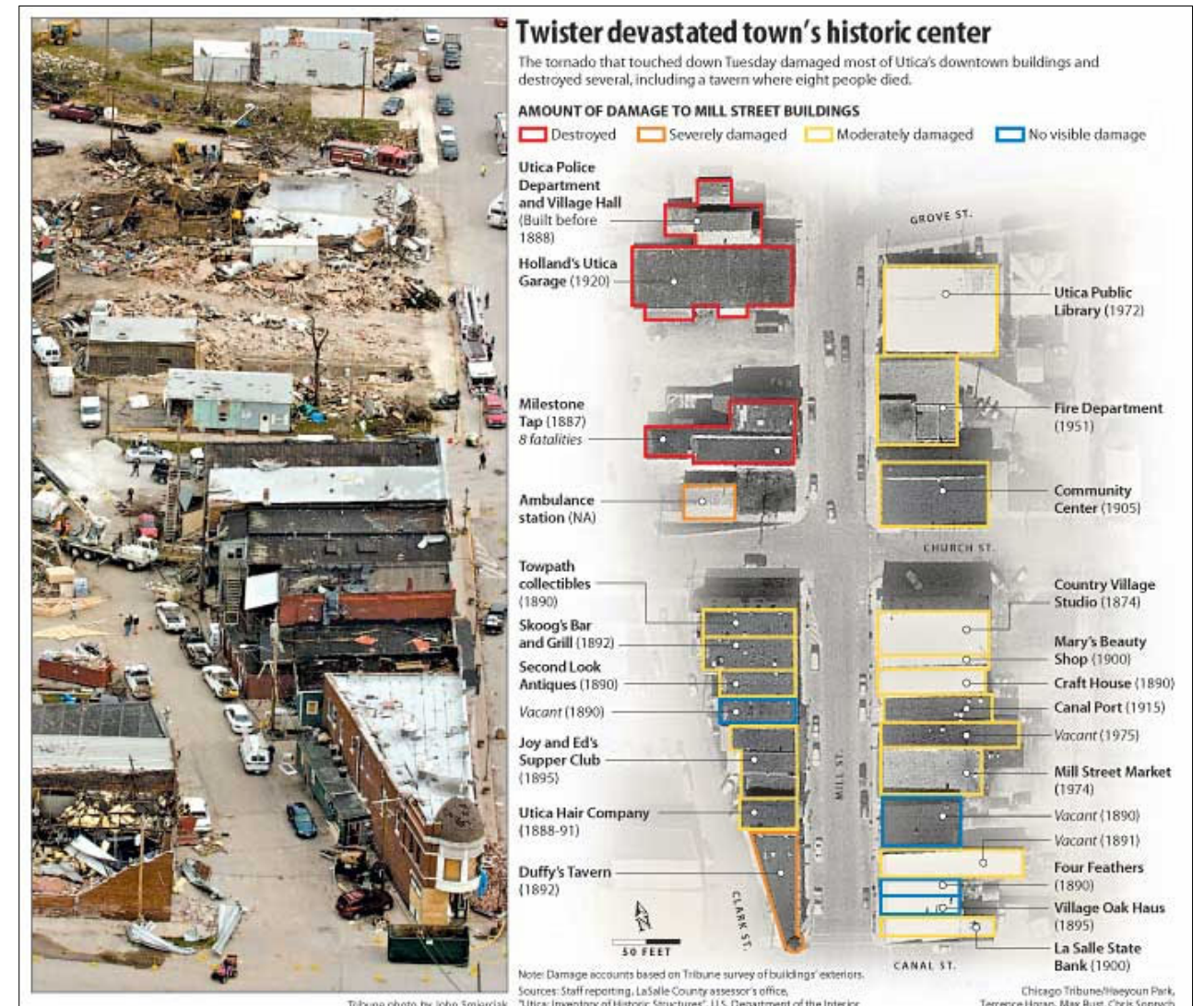
Sincerely,

Jerry Weller
Representative in Congress
11th District, Illinois

1210 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515-1311
(202) 225-3635
www.house.gov/weller

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(815) 740-2028

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

IN LASALLE COUNTY
(815) 433-0085
IN McLEAN COUNTY
(309) 557-0448



“Twister devastated town’s historic center”

Published by the *Chicago Tribune*, the photo and graphic image above depict the destructive power of the April 20th tornado, which also took the lives of eight people.

DISTRICT OFFICE:

904 SHOOTING PARK ROAD
PERU, IL 61354
815/223-3747

SPRINGFIELD OFFICE:

121A STATE HOUSE
SPRINGFIELD, IL 62706
217/782-8287



PATRICK D. WELCH
STATE SENATOR • 38TH DISTRICT
Assistant Majority Leader

COMMITTEES:

APPROPRIATIONS II, CHAIRMAN
APPROPRIATIONS I
ENVIRONMENT & ENERGY
REVENUE

email: welch@senatedem.state.il.us

July 15, 2004

Mayor Fred Esmond
Village of Utica
255 Mill Street
P.O. Box 188
Utica, Illinois 61373

Re: FEMA Long Term Recovery Plan

Dear Mayor Esmond:

The Village of Utica has begun a strong comeback from its devastating losses of a few months ago. The unbroken spirit of Uticans and surrounding Illinois Valley communities has shown what a wonderful place we have to live in LaSalle County.

We must look at the opportunity now at hand with the focus of various governmental agencies on Utica. The proposed Recovery Plan offers the best hope for Utica's future. I wholeheartedly endorse this proposal and look forward to assisting you and the Village implement its recommendations.

Sincerely,

Patrick D. Welch
State Senator 38th District

PDW:df

CAPITOL OFFICE

STRATTON BUILDING
286-S
SPRINGFIELD, IL 62706
217-782-0140
217-557-7680 FAX

DISTRICT OFFICE

108 W. ST. PAUL STREET
SPRING VALLEY, IL 61362
815-664-2717
815-663-1629 FAX



FRANK J. MAUTINO
STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 76th DISTRICT

COMMITTEES

Agriculture & Conservation
Appropriation - Public Safety (Vice Chairman)
Insurance (Chairman)
Local Government
Veteran's Affairs

CHIP Board
Economic & Fiscal Commission
Legislative Audit Commission

July 8, 2004

RE: Utica Recovery Plan
Utica, Illinois

To Whom It May Concern:

I would appreciate if this correspondence be considered of my emphatic support of the Utica Recovery Plan submitted by FEMA for the reconstruction of the Village of Utica, Illinois, following its devastation by a tornado on April 20, 2004.

I will do everything within the capacity of my office to support the option delineated within the Utica Recovery Plan. I would like to commend all agencies involved in this project and am offering assistance in securing state match funding for the FEMA dollars available to the Village of Utica, Illinois.

The Utica Recovery Plan represents a true consolidation of the wishes of the residents, businesspeople, civic organizations and the officials of the Village of Utica. It is essential to the continued vitality of the Village of Utica, which lost its entire business district and many homes, that the plan be approved and funded.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

FRANK J. MAUTINO
State Representative

FJM/spl



Village of North Utica

P.O. Box 188 - North Utica, IL 61373

Phone: 815-667-4111 - Fax: 815-667-4679

July 14, 2004

Dear Utica Recovery Supporters:

The citizens of the Village of North Utica are back on their feet after the devastating tornado that struck our town on April 20, 2004, taking the lives of eight friends and neighbors.

Our determination to rebuild our community gets stronger every day; however, we need your help. We see many possibilities for our historic community to come back better than before and gain the momentum to carry us into the future as a thriving, self-sustaining town. We need the help of a variety of agencies and organizations to fund projects that will bring Utica back.

The townspeople, the Village Trustees and I have banded together and worked closely with technical assistance personnel to prepare a Comprehensive Recovery Plan. We have provided our input and support to generate a list of vital projects for the revitalization of the village. More than 230 Utica residents and businesses owners came to the July 8 Final Draft Meeting to offer comments and exhibit our solidarity.

Utica is a great place now, but with much needed assistance from you, Utica will come back stronger and better than before.

Most sincerely,

Fred Esmond, Mayor
Village of North Utica



Village President

Fred Esmond

Village Clerk

Angela Brown

Village Trustees

Warren Munson
Mary Pawlak
Dennis Hamilton
Patrick Flynn
Gerri Lynn Skoog
William Ciccone



Village of North Utica

P.O. Box 188 - North Utica, IL 61373

Phone: 815-667-4111 - Fax: 815-667-4679

July 14, 2004

Dear Utica Recovery Supporters:

The people of the Village of North Utica, Illinois, will never forget April 20, 2004. Around 6 p.m. that day, a devastating F3 tornado hit our village, killing eight citizens and destroying or damaging a large number of downtown structures.

We are intent on rebuilding for the present and future citizens of Utica, and we need your help. The strong involvement of our community in the recovery process shows dedication, desire and the need to move forward on projects that are vital to this community's future.

We recognize that we cannot do it alone. With your much needed help Utica can repair the damage, rebuild lost structures and move ahead to become a healthy, prosperous community.

While a great deal was destroyed in Utica that awful day, our spirit and determination are stronger than ever.

Sincerely,

Patrick Flynn, Trustee
Village of Utica Board of Trustees

Village President

Fred Esmond

Village Clerk

Angela Brown

Village Trustees

Warren Munson
Mary Pawlak
Dennis Hamilton
Patrick Flynn
Gerri Lynn Skoog
William Ciccone

Utica Planning Commission

Village of North Utica, Illinois

Chairman
Tom Guttilla

Commissioners
Dee Barrera
Shelba Bimm
Tom Brown
Doug Gift
Warren Munson, Sr.
Doug Overlee
Donald Robey

July 14, 2004

Dear Utica Recovery Supporters:

Less than three months ago, our hometown of less than a 1,000 residents was struck by a deadly tornado. Its path of destruction brought extensive damage to dozens of homes and half of the downtown businesses, and the tragic end to the lives of eight long-time family members and friends.

In those three months we have learned the hard lesson that recovery is a process ... sometimes a very difficult process.

With FEMA's assistance, we have managed to create a *Utica United Recovery Plan* that address our needs and establish priorities for our recovery. Almost two dozen agencies are participating in the Federal Recovery Task Force and State of Illinois Utica Recovery Committee to help identify funding resources for specific projects. Our community is firmly united behind this recovery effort. Your continued support will ensure our success.

On behalf of the people of the Village of North Utica, we thank you for the help you have given us to date. We want you to know that "Utica's Back" and we ask that you continue to "Back Utica."

Thank you.



Tom Guttilla
Chairman
Planning Commission
Village of North Utica, IL



P.O. Box 188, Utica, IL 61373 (Tel) 815-667-4111 (Fax) 815-667-4679

SUPERVISOR
GREGG SCHNEIDER

CLERK
SUE CALKINS

Road Commissioner
JERRY CAREY

UTICA TOWNSHIP

P.O. BOX 472
UTICA, IL 61373

TOWNSHIP TRUSTEES

CONNIE GUERRERO
BERNARD HETTEL
KEN KREISER
KAY SEANARD

Community Hall Managers

EDWARD PAT BROWN
MARGARET COMISKEY
CRAIG SMITH

July 14, 2004

Dear Supporters of Utica:

On April 20, 2004, a horrible tornado severely damaged the downtown area and ended the lives of eight of our family and friends.

It was initially difficult to see tomorrow let alone the "future". Today, our vision and determination are focused as we plan to rebuild and strengthen our community. With the help of agencies like yours the Village of North Utica can again have a bright future.

Assisted by a FEMA team of technical assistance experts, we have defined our needs and set priorities that will allow us to move forward on a number of projects that will be the new foundation for this historic village.

We now must implement our plans. There is so much potential – for everyone – residents, business owner and the hundreds of thousands of visitors that pass through Utica each year. The desire and need to implement our plans is real. Your help is necessary to make it a reality.

Thank you.



Gregg Schneider
Supervisor
Utica Township



Simulation of Mill and Canal Streets



Downtown looking north post-disaster



Simulation of Church and Mill Streets



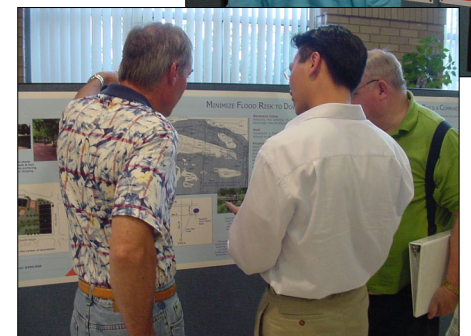
Church and Mill Streets post-tornado

These “visioneered” conceptual images of Utica are intended to present a realistic picture of what the future Utica could look like. To produce these pictures, engineers on the FEMA Recovery Team took post-disaster photos of the community and then used computer visualization software to superimpose images of key proposed recovery projects. The purpose is not to define specific land uses, promote any particular business type, or to identify parcels of property for acquisition, but rather to provide a general feel for how the community could develop as recovery progresses.



Utica Town Meeting July 8, 2004

More than 230 Utica residents, businesses, and local officials attended the public meeting to hear and see the presentation of the Utica United Recovery Plan.



Utica United Recovery Plan - Review of Community Responses

Copies of the "Rough Draft - Utica United Recovery Plan" were hand-delivered to every family, business, and local official in Utica on June 28 and June 29. It provided descriptions of 20 projects (Housing was included subsequent to the Rough Draft) and each project was categorized as either "HIGH," "MODERATE," or "COMMUNITY INTEREST" based on its importance to Utica's long-term recovery, as designated by the Sustainable Recovery Team.

In order to further assess how the community would prioritize the recovery projects, each copy of the draft included a Comment Sheet asking the respondent to choose their top 5 projects, and to provide detailed comments on the Rough Draft. 108 responses were submitted by July 6th, and 7 more on July 8th, raising the total to 115 comment sheets received.

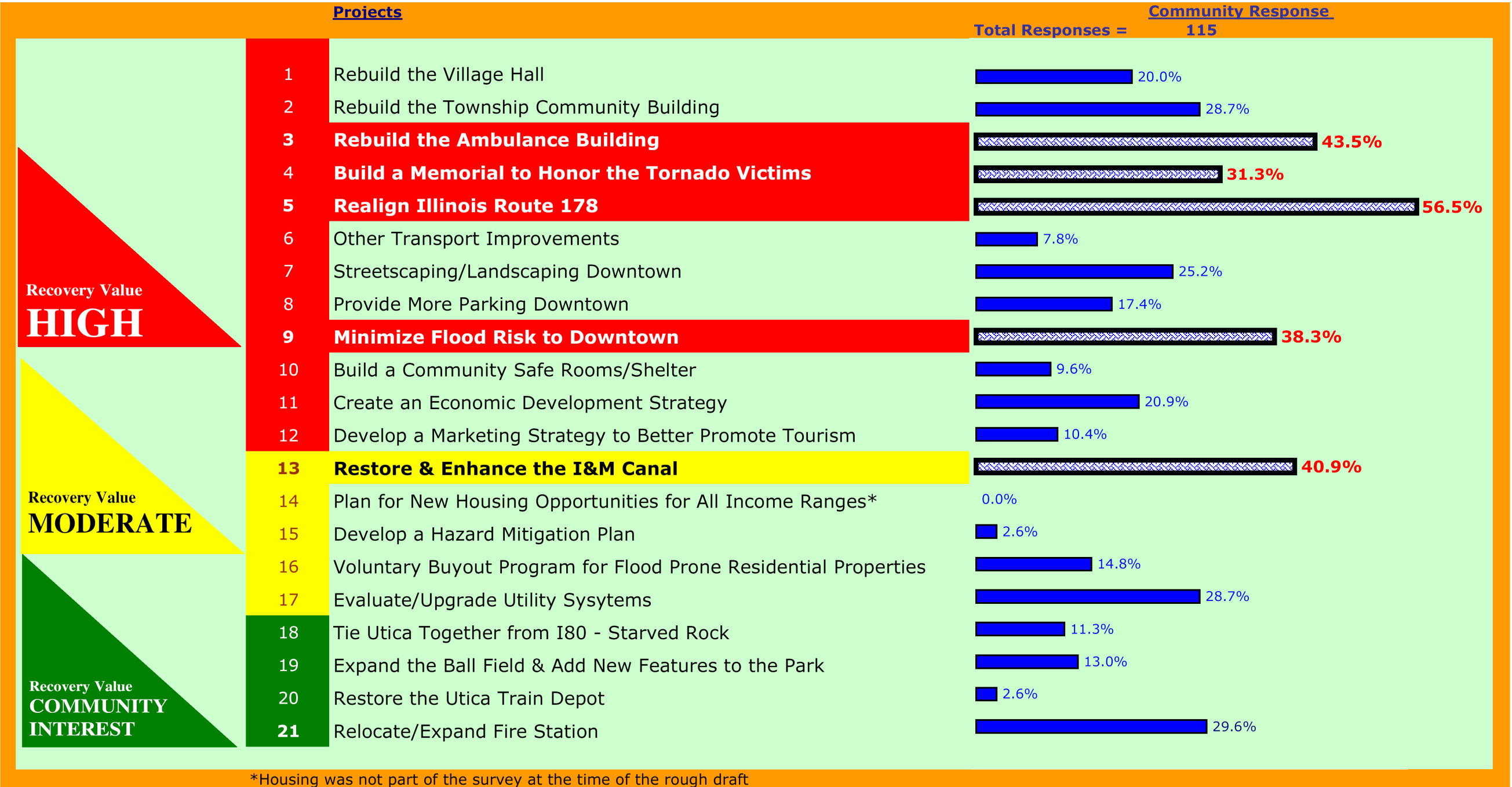
Below is a breakdown by percentage showing community priority preferences. The left panel lists all 21 projects as they appear in the Plan. The right panel shows the percentage of votes each project received. While 4 of the 5 priorities chosen by the community are in the HIGH category, one is in the MODERATE category.

- HIGH**

High recovery value projects are the most urgently needed and all available resources should be focused on immediate implementation.
- MODERATE**

Moderate Value projects, although not essential to recovery, are likely to produce substantial benefits for the community and should be pursued as time and funding permit over the next few years.
- COMMUNITY INTEREST**

Community Interest projects are those that are of relatively less significance, but are still probably worthy of more discussion and thoughtful consideration as recovery proceeds.



*Housing was not part of the survey at the time of the rough draft

REBUILD THE VILLAGE HALL



Patrick Flynn
Village Trustee

“One of the first steps to restoring our community is to get into a new Village Hall. The recovery process will place extra demands on the Village and we need an adequate facility to work out of and conduct business in. Seeing the seat of government reestablished will be an important confidence builder.”

Sample of one-story masonry replacement building



Utica Elevator building and adjacent warehouse



Multi-purpose building



Cost

Replacement-in-Kind: \$418,233
(Land acquisition, site improvement, & construction of a new, code compliant building)

Utica Elevator: \$1,107,000
(Land acquisition, site improvement, & renovation of existing structure. Sharing the building would reduce the cost)

Multi-Purpose Building: \$210,000
(Site improvement and interior finishes to pre-existing shell)

Recovery Value

Rebuilding Village Hall will restore essential governmental functions and services within the Village. In addition, a well-designed Village Hall built in or near downtown could provide an anchor for downtown revitalization.

Goal

Construct a new Village Hall outside the 500-year floodplain consolidating with the Township Community Building, if practicable.

Project Description

The Village Hall was a 2,300 square foot, two-story cement block and wood frame building located on the NW corner of Mill and Grove Streets, in the 100-year floodplain. The second story housed the Mayor’s office and Police Department, while the garage beneath the main floor was used for parking and record-storage.



Village Hall Pre-Disaster

Options

Sound floodplain management practices strongly encourage placement of federally funded buildings outside of areas with a designated flood risk. For critical facilities, Executive Order 11988 establishes a process for identifying and evaluating alternative locations outside the 500-year floodplain.

Replacement-in-Kind

Build a replacement facility outside the 500-year floodplain. This approach protects the structure from future flooding and allows for commercial development of the original building location. A well-designed building can set the architectural standard for downtown development.

Utica Elevator Building

Relocate the Village Hall into the existing Utica Elevator building: This two-story facility has a full basement and sufficient parking space. It is suitable for renovation and is located outside the 500-year floodplain. Utilizing this building allows for commercial development at the original location, and also presents an opportunity for the Village to lease excess space within the Utica Elevator Building for commercial use by co-tenants. Lease income received by the Village would reduce building operation and maintenance costs. The availability of the property and the cost to acquire and renovate this building needs to be determined.

Note: Co-Location with Utica Township (For either option above): A co-location approach, between the Village and the Township, consolidating “under one roof” could reduce acquisition, construction and annual maintenance costs for both entities. This alternative would allow for commercial development on the two downtown lots.

Convert the Multi-Purpose Building

The Village multi-purpose building is currently a partially constructed 4,800 square foot wood-frame structure with metal exterior finishes, located within the 100-year floodplain. Building-out this structure as the new Village Hall could allow for commercial development of the previous downtown location; or alternatively, since the tornado destroyed a significant amount of retail space in Utica, this property may have significant commercial value.

Note: Options above anticipate consolidation of the City Clerk’s Office, Police Department and Village Hall functions into one facility.

Recovery Value

HIGH

REBUILD THE TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY BUILDING

Recovery Value

Rebuilding the Township Community Building will restore Township services, including providing a meeting facility, administering tax funds, and coordinating the road program. The new Township building, if constructed within or near downtown and with appropriate architectural design, could help set a tone for downtown redevelopment.

Goal

Construct a new Township Community Building to meet the needs of the community by providing meeting space for a wide variety of events and functions. A significant design consideration is minimizing annual operation and maintenance costs.



Township Community Building
Pre-Disaster

Project Description

The Township Community Building was an 8,000 square foot two-story plus basement brick building located on the NE corner of Church and Mill Streets, downtown, which housed the township office, record storage room, meeting hall and kitchen. The building was demolished due to tornado damage.

Options

Sound floodplain management practices strongly encourage placement of federally funded buildings outside of areas with a designated flood risk. For critical facilities, Executive Order 11988 establishes a process for identifying and evaluating alternative locations outside the 500-year floodplain.

Replacement-in-Kind

If Township functions, such as tax record storage, are incorporated into the new building, it could be considered a critical facility, in which case, it would be highly desirable to relocate the building outside the 500-year floodplain. This would make the original site

available for commercial development.

Utica Elevator Building

Relocate the Township Community Building into the existing Utica Elevator building. This two-story facility has a full basement and sufficient parking space. It is suitable for renovation and is located outside the 500-year floodplain. Utilizing this building allows for commercial development of the original location. The availability of the property and the cost to acquire and renovate this building is to be determined.

Note: Co-Location with the Village of Utica (For either option above): A co-location approach, between the Village and the Township, consolidating “under one roof” could reduce acquisition, construction and annual maintenance costs for both entities. This alternative would allow for commercial development on the two downtown lots.

Acquire & Convert Village Multi-purpose Building

The Village multi-purpose building is currently a partially constructed 4,800 square foot wood-frame structure with metal exterior finishes located within the 100-year floodplain. The Township could acquire the multi-purpose building from the Village and finish it out as the new Community Building. Under this scenario, the Township should give strong consideration to storing any critical records in an alternate location to avoid the risk of flood damage.

Cost

Replacement-in-Kind: \$819,000

(Land acquisition, site improvement, & construction of new code compliant building)

Utica Elevator: \$1,107,000

(Land acquisition, site improvement, & renovation of existing structure; sharing the building would reduce the cost)

Multi-Purpose Building: \$598,000

(Land acquisition, site improvement and interior finishing to pre-existing shell)

Example of one-story masonry replacement building



Utica Elevator Building



Village Multi-purpose Building



Gregg Schneider
Township Supervisor

“This is our chance to get a Township Building that will really be a place where the people of Utica can come together. There were a lot of memories made in that old building, and we need a place to start making some new ones.”

Recovery Value

HIGH

REBUILD THE AMBULANCE BUILDING



Shelba Bimm
EMS Coordinator

“We need something with enough room for all the vehicles. We should take the time to make sure that we pick the best location to serve the entire community and plan for future growth.”

Example two-bay metal building



Improved satellite station

Utica Elevator warehouse property



Cost

Replacement-in-Kind: \$140,000

(0.25 acre land, site & utility improvements, & construction of new, 900SF code-compliant building)

Improved Satellite Station: \$217,000

(0.5 acre land, site & utility improvements, & new, 1,350SF code-compliant building)

Utica Warehouse: To be determined

Recovery Value

Restoring the Utica Community Fire Protection District (U.C.F.P.D.) ambulance building to secure and protect its two ambulances and equipment, ensuring its emergency medical response capability is essential to reestablishing key services within the community.

Goal

Construct a new ambulance garage to meet the needs of the community and provide services to Starved Rock State Park and support for accidents on I-80.

Project Description

The U.C.F.P.D. ambulance building was a 1,025 square foot one-story wood frame building located on Church Street, just west of Mill Street that housed two ambulances, an office, a record storage area and a bathroom. The ambulance garage was destroyed by the tornado.

Options

Sound floodplain management practices strongly encourage placement of federally funded buildings outside of areas with a designated flood risk. For critical facilities, Executive Order 11988 establishes a process for identifying and evaluating alternative locations outside the 500-year floodplain.



Ambulance Building
after the Tornado

Replacement-in-Kind Satellite

Building a new “replacement-in-kind” ambulance satellite station outside the 500-year floodplain is highly desirable. This would restore the original separation of ambulance and fire suppression operations; however, the increased distance between the new ambulance satellite and the fire district may complicate communications and coordination between the two services.

Improved Satellite Station

Building a new fire district satellite station outside the 500-year floodplain for both ambulance and fire suppression services would produce multiple benefits to the community, housing both ambulance and fire suppression equipment, and supplementing response capability of the existing fire station. Separate facilities would improve response time to certain sections of the community; however, building maintenance and personnel administration costs would increase.

Utica Elevator – Warehouse Property

Relocate the Ambulance Building onto the Utica Elevator warehouse property (adjacent to the Utica Elevator Building). This building-site is outside of the 500-year floodplain and also has sufficient space for an expanded Fire Station, as need dictates. Utilizing this property would allow commercial development of the original Ambulance Building location downtown. The availability of the property and the cost to acquire the property remains to be determined.

Recovery Value

HIGH

BUILD A **M**EMORIAL TO HONOR THE TORNADO VICTIMS

Recovery Value

An important part of the recovery process is finding an appropriate way to honor the victims of the disaster. While the entire rebuilding process is a tribute to those who lost their lives and to those whose heroic efforts saved other lives, a memorial integrated into the redeveloped Utica is essential.

Goal

Design and construct a memorial in honor of those who lost their lives in the disaster.

Project Description

The memorial should be incorporated into a functional component of the revitalized Utica in order to provide a meaningful link from the disaster to the community's future. The memorial should include the names of the victims as well as recognition for the first responders who came to Utica's aid.

Options

Preliminary Design Concept (Example Only)

An octagonal gazebo (eight sides for the eight victims) along with 8 benches arranged in a semi-circular pattern, with trees and shrubbery around the gazebo to make the memorial garden an attractive community gathering place.

Cost

Memorial: \$25,000

(One, 16' diameter octagonal wood gazebo, 8 wooden benches & landscaping)



An octagonal gazebo with eight supporting vertical posts and eight benches could provide a lasting and appropriate memorial.



A temporary memorial to the eight victims of the April 20, 2004 tornado



Sisters **Phyllis Mertes** & **Gayle Abbott** (right) lost their brother, Jay Vezain in the April 20, 2004 tornado.

“The eight lives lost in the tornado touched every single person in Utica. I like the idea of having the memorial be a gazebo where people can come to pay respect or simply to enjoy some quiet time. I think that would be very nice.” —Phyllis Mertes

Recovery Value

HIGH

REALIGN ILLINOIS ROUTE 178



John Kos
District Engineer
IDOT – District 3

“We did a feasibility study in the aftermath of the tornado and subsequently decided to pursue more detailed engineering to realign Highway 178 to better define the potential for improvements. It depends on the support from Utica.”

Recovery Value

Separating truck and car traffic downtown, in conjunction with complementary transportation/streetscaping improvements, would enhance the business setting and improve the pedestrian environment, while maximizing the efficiency of traffic flows through the community. The tornado damaged or destroyed several structures in the proposed realignment corridor and many redevelopment plans are on-hold until the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) completes a detailed study of the project area and obtains design approval and funding.

Goal

Provide a transportation system that is sensitive to the community’s rebuilding plans, promotes a higher level of service and traffic safety, and minimizes the negative impacts of truck traffic through the community. Reducing congestion and noise, improving air quality, mobility and pedestrian safety, enhances the downtown business climate. At a minimum, the right-of-way corridor along the proposed alignment must be preserved in the short term through an advance right-of-way acquisition project.

Project Description

At the request of the Village, the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) agreed to conduct a Feasibility Study on the realignment of Illinois Route 178 (IL-178). An estimated 600 trucks pass through downtown Utica on a typical business day. Truck navigation on the narrow downtown streets, with sharp angled turns, generates conflicts for passenger vehicles and pedestrian. Realignment of IL-178 would straighten the alignment, routing traffic 1 to 2 blocks west of downtown Utica. The final project scope and limits will be determined through a detailed preliminary engineering study.

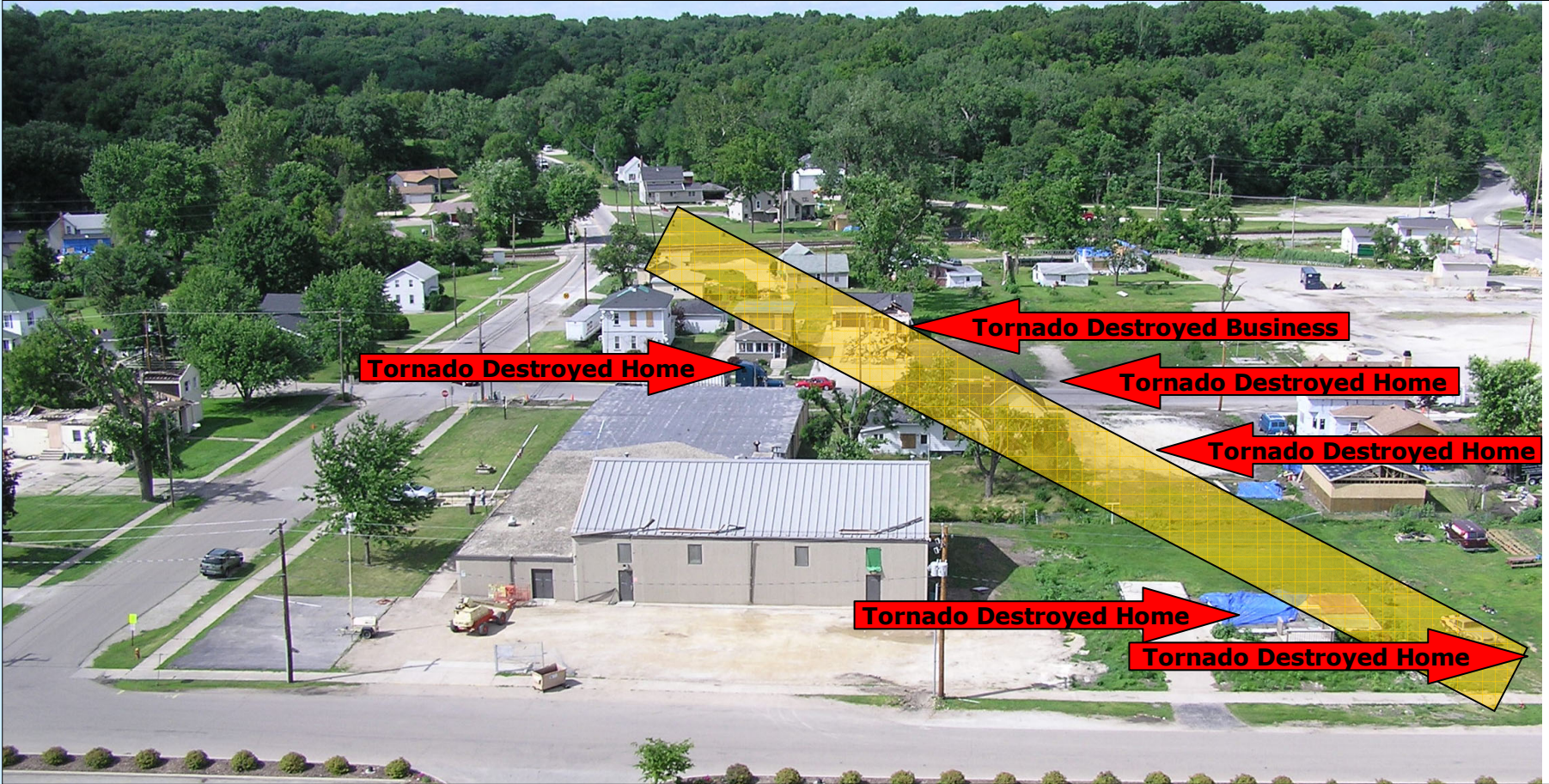
Options

Phase 1: Right-of-Way Acquisition

Finalize the roadway corridor studies and complete sufficient engineering work to undertake an advance right-of-way acquisition project. Top priority should be given to tornado-damaged properties, so that rebuilding decisions can be expedited. If necessary, acquisition of undamaged properties can be deferred.

Phase 2: Construction

The proposed IL-178 realignment would be most cost-effectively constructed as a single project from the CSX railroad crossing to the tie-in with the existing highway just south of the I&M Canal, including a new bridge over the canal. However, if funding is limited, it may be worthwhile to consider construction of an interim realignment which would tie back into the highway just north of the I&M Canal and utilize the existing bridge until a new bridge can be funded.



Cost

Phase 1: \$1.4M for right-of-way acquisition

Phase 2: \$3.1M

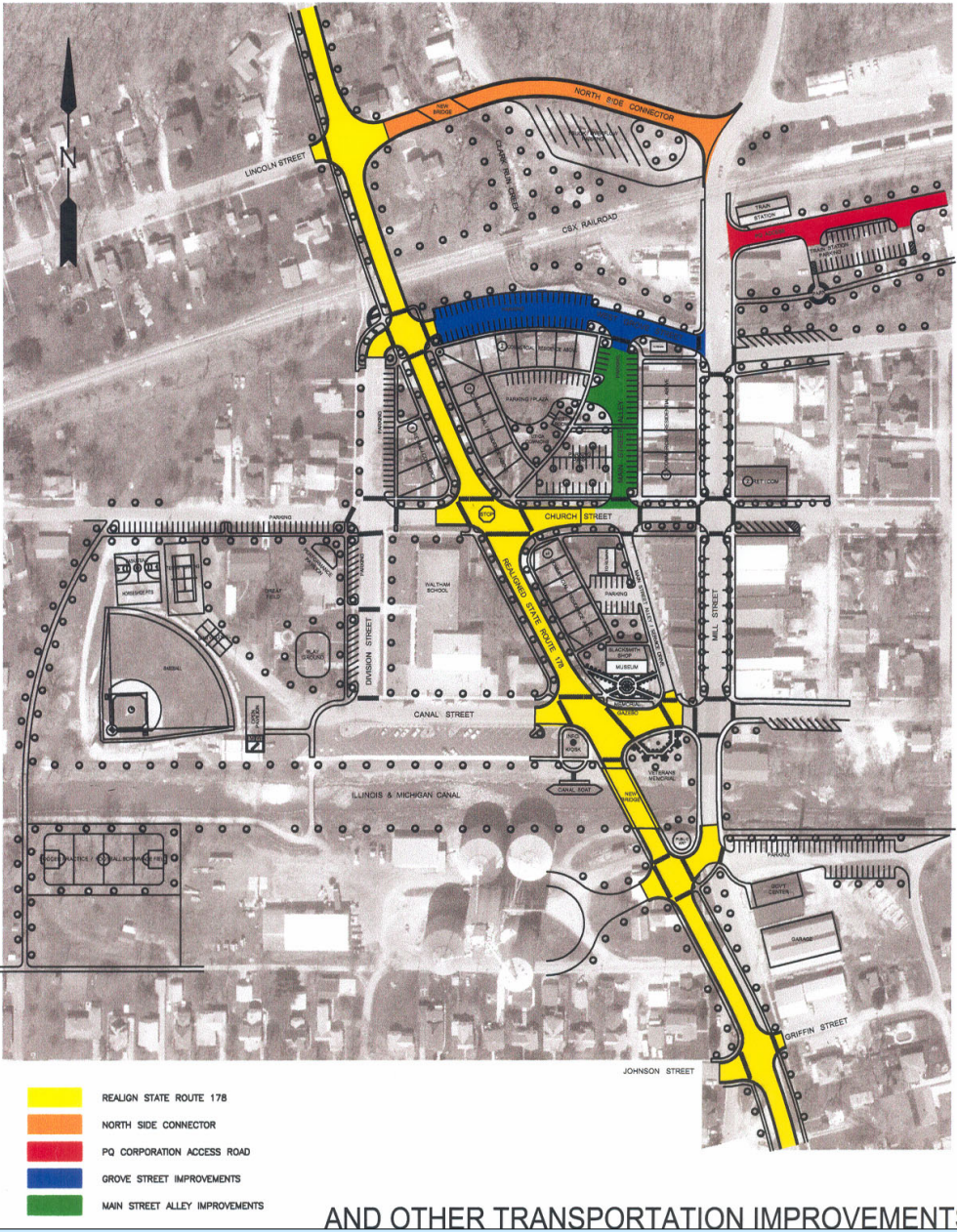
(Incl. construction of approx. 2100LF of 2-lane state hwy., an 80’ bridge, railroad crossing adjustment, utilities, traffic control, landscaping, design & engineering)

Recovery Value

HIGH

OTHER TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS

REALIGN ILLINOIS ROUTE 178



Recovery Value

A reconfigured street grid system is needed to integrate the downtown with the Illinois Route 178 realignment to encourage more visits to downtown businesses.

Goal

Enhance mobility, improve the downtown business climate, increase opportunities for new development, and significantly improve the pedestrian atmosphere.

Project Description

The downtown street grid system needs to be reworked in order to complement the proposed IL-178 realignment and support land assemblage to allow for efficient development. Improving the street grid system will allow the trucks to bypass downtown while promoting more shopping visits to the downtown business district.

Options

North-Side Connector

Construct a new roadway and bridge connecting the existing IL-178 to Mill Street to provide a route for trucks to enter and exit the downtown area to the north without disrupting traffic in the heart of downtown.

PQ Corporation Access Road

Construct a new access road that would extend east from Mill Street between the Post Office and Train Station along Clark Run Creek to the PQ Corporation. The road would remove truck traffic from the residential neighborhood along the existing access route on Grove Street and improve safety conditions.

Grove Street Improvements

Upgrade West Grove Street from a one-lane, one-way road to a functional two-lane, two-way street with pull-in parking on both sides between IL-178 and Mill Street. Grove Street improvements would draw tourist traffic into the downtown area by providing an additional downtown entryway, improving overall mobility, and providing additional downtown parking.

Main Street Improvements

Upgrade and realign Main Street between Church and Grove Streets to provide a more logical street network and additional parking for future expanded development in downtown Utica. This street segment can be designed as an attractive green street and green parking area using generous landscaping and permeable pavers, blended seamlessly with the plaza and commons proposed immediately to the west. The Main Street Alley between Canal and Church will be designed primarily as a service drive and for parking access.

Cost

North-side Connector: \$620,000 (incl. a 600', 2-lane village roadway, a 60' bridge, utilities, traffic control, landscaping, design & engineering)

PQ Access Road: \$240,000 (land acquisition, pavement for 1080' of road)

Grove/Main Street Improvements: \$300,000 (land acquisition, curbs, pavement, parking)



Stan Slusser
PQ Corporation

“Realigning IL-178 is only one part of the solution. These other road projects could go a long way to making it easier to get downtown. It would improve the quality of life for the citizens of Utica.”

Recovery Value
HIGH

STREETSCAPE/LANDSCAPE DOWNTOWN



Gloria Alvarado, Asst. Dir.
Utica Public Library District

“**U**tica should be pleasing to the eye for people driving, walking and bicycling. We need to beautify our streets and improve our sidewalks.”



Doug Gift
Planning
Commissioner

“**W**e have an active Garden Club, and we should extend our appreciation of attractive landscaping to our streets. If we do it right, it will really add a special touch to the community.”

Recovery Value

Downtown Utica has long been considered one of the most beautiful and historic business districts in the region. The tornado has damaged much of the built environment, which will eventually be restored; however, it is essential to immediately implement a streetscaping project to recapture some of the charm of the downtown district. In addition, streetscaping of downtown is needed in conjunction with the proposed realignment of Illinois Route 178 in order to maintain and enhance the business district as a visitor destination.

Goal

Beautify downtown Utica by adding streetscape and landscape elements and plazas to create an attractive and convenient destination for residents and visitors. Design a pedestrian-friendly, attractive downtown setting for comfortable shopping, walking, and enjoying historic and other attractions.

Project Description

Establish a uniform streetscape and add central public spaces. This will encourage pedestrians to spend more time downtown and enhance the quality of their experience.



This simulation demonstrates how a uniform streetscape with street trees, landscaping, cross-walk improvements, and design continuity can enhance the quality of the downtown experience for residents & visitors.

Options

Downtown Streetscape Improvements

Uniform and attractive streetscapes will integrate new and existing streets with the proposed Illinois Route 178 realignment and draw visitors to downtown. Historic street lights, trees, planters, public art, benches, sidewalk improvements (including widening for seasonal outdoor dining), “bulb-outs” providing a safer crossing design at the corners on Mill Street, and crosswalks will help restore the vitality of the downtown district.

Gateway Park/Public Restroom

A gateway would welcome visitors coming into Utica from the north with an attractively landscaped sign of historic character. A central plaza and commons would create a central park-like setting amidst expanded commercial and residential development in the vicinity of Clark and Church streets. A public restroom would be included in this area. An information kiosk of area attractions, trash receptacles, and a drinking fountain would be located at the east end of the Canal Street parking lot which will serve as a southern entryway into downtown Utica.

Cost

Downtown Streetscape: \$750,000
Gateway: \$55,000
Public Restroom: \$40,000
Information Kiosk: \$15,000

Recovery Value

HIGH

PROVIDE MORE PARKING DOWNTOWN

Recovery Value

Additional parking in downtown Utica has been in high demand in recent years to support the robust business district fueled by a wide variety of trips by local residents, visitors and tourists. As the business district redevelops and expands in the aftermath of the tornado, it is essential to take advantage of the opportunity afforded by land use reconfiguration to provide ample parking for convenient access to shopping, dining, special events and other downtown destinations.

Goal

Provide a sufficient supply of accessible parking to support downtown businesses and nearby destinations.

Project Description

Create a mix of new parking spaces by increasing the availability of on-street parking and developing new innovatively designed off-street parking lots. Expanded parking is needed to accommodate the evolution of downtown business development, to respond to growing traffic volumes, and to meet the needs for overflow parking during peak visitation periods and community special events.

Options & Costs

Enhance Parking on Existing Streets

Improve existing road design to include curbside and pull-in parking along Mill Street, Church Street, and Division Street (Total of 116 spaces, curbs and striping at a total \$120,000).

New On-Street Parking along the Reconfigured Grove Street

Design and construct new head-in parking in conjunction with the reconfiguration of Grove Street (Total of 68 spaces, resurfacing, curbs and striping at a total of \$50,000).

New Parking Lot south of Church Street

Design and construct a new parking lot on the block south of Church Street between Mill Street and Illinois Route 178. This lot will serve the expanded commercial development in this area and be accessible via the improved service drive between Canal and Church Streets (Total of 14 spaces, resurfacing, curbs and striping at a total of \$20,000).

New Parking Park & Plaza

Design and construct a "parking park" in the center portion of the downtown that is central to all existing and future downtown development. This "parking park" will be developed in conjunction with Main Street improvements between Church and Grove Streets. The "parking park" combines satisfying parking needs with generous open space provisions, permeable surfacing, and minimal striping. It will blend seamlessly into the plaza and commons immediately to the west. (Total of 64 spaces, land acquisition, asphalt, pavers, structural grass, curbs and striping at a total of \$250,000)

New Truck Parking

Design and construct a truck parking area in the north central area of downtown. This area would accommodate parking large trucks, with a lower cost gravel surface, and encourage truck drivers to take advantage of downtown amenities. It would be located north of the CSX railroad and west of Mill Street (Total of 9 truck spaces, land acquisition, grading and gravel base at a total of \$50,000).



Ample shade
Green look & feel
Permeable surfacing
Minimal striping



Cost
271 new parking spaces: \$490,000



Missy Harmon
Owner
Canal Port

"More parking downtown would be a huge boost for all our businesses. This would make it easier for our residents to come to downtown, and it is absolutely essential for encouraging more visitors to stop in and check out Utica, and for attracting new businesses to locate here."

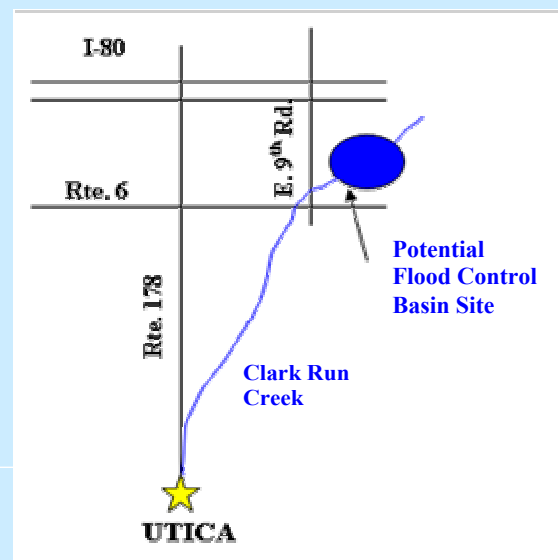
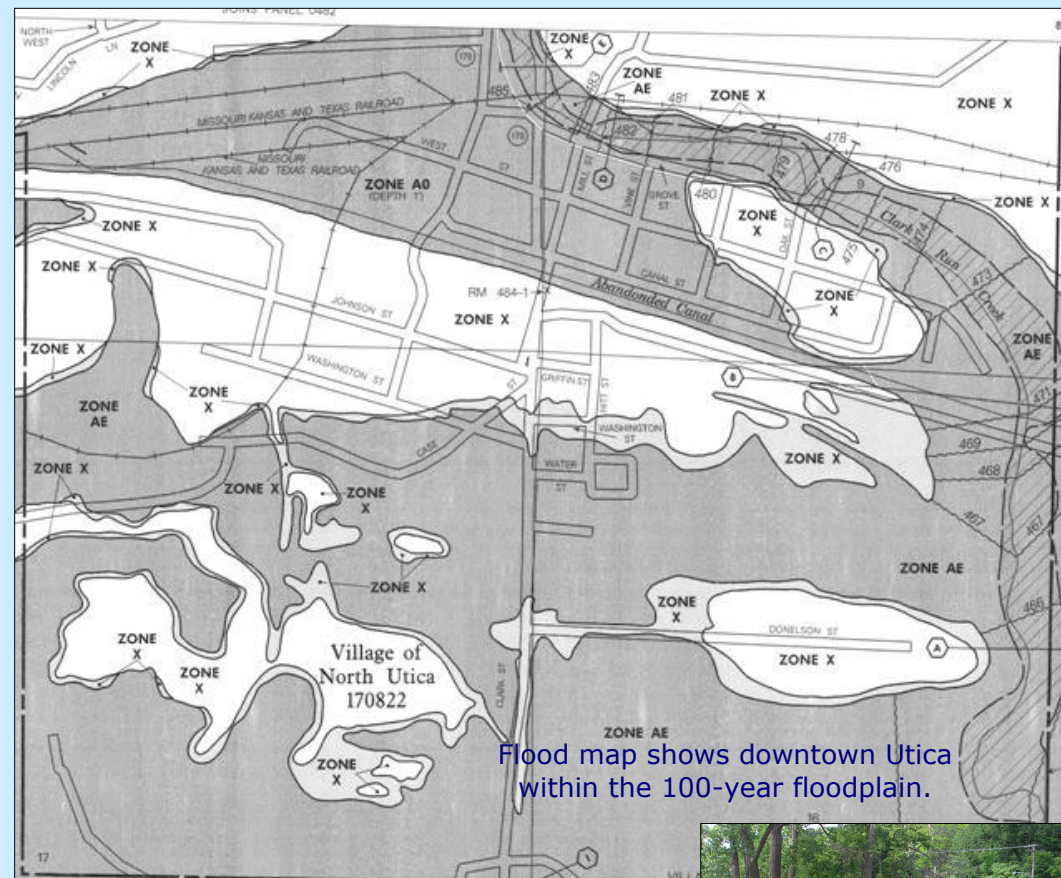
Recovery Value
HIGH

MINIMIZE FLOOD RISK TO DOWNTOWN



Scott Cofoid,
Flood plain manager,
Building Inspector,
Zoning Officer for
Utica.

“Just because downtown does not flood very often does not mean that there is not a real risk. For the economic well-being of the community and the safety of its residents, every effort should be made to minimize the potential for flood damage.”



Flooding in downtown Utica is caused when Clark Run Creek overflows its banks following periods of heavy rains.

The proposed flood control basin would be located on Clark Run Creek upstream of downtown Utica.

Recovery Value

Reducing the potential for flood damages in downtown Utica would alleviate economic impacts, encourage new development, and help to revitalize the downtown.

Goal

Implement a flood protection measure to reduce the risk of flooding from Clark Run Creek, in an attempt to remove the downtown portion of the community from the 100-year floodplain.

Project Description

Utica has experienced periodic flood damage ranging from annual nuisance flooding to widespread damage. A majority of the commercial development in the Village and multiple downtown municipal buildings are located in the 100-year floodplain. The impacts of recurring flood damage, along with the continuous risk of future damage, restrict the economic potential of the area. Changing the delineation of the 100-year floodplain is a complex process, and there is no easy way to immediately remove downtown from the floodplain as post-tornado rebuilding proceeds; however, long-range flood protection options do exist.

Options

Flood Control Basin on Clark Run Creek

The construction of a flood control basin on Clark Run Creek upstream of downtown Utica would limit the flow during flood events, and may reduce the flood depths in the community. Although a detailed feasibility study would be required, preliminary estimates show the basin's normal water surface area would be at least 15 acres in size, and 100 acres in size during the 100-year flood. In addition to containing floodwaters, the basin could also be used as a recreational feature and serve as a storm water management facility to support future development. The specific location and design of the basin would be determined with careful consideration regarding the impacts on nearby natural resource areas and wildlife habitat. The project would require the acquisition of approximately 160 acres of agricultural land.

High Flow Bypass from Clark Run Creek

This project includes the construction of approximately a 5' x 8' box culvert from Clark Run Creek to the I&M canal. In the 100-year flood, the culvert would be designed to convey floodwaters into the canal that would typically flow overland through downtown. The culvert could run through an existing municipal right-of-way, or along the route of realigned IL-178. The inlet to the culvert would be designed to maintain base flow in the creek and only operate in high flow events. The potential for debris clogging at the inlet to the culvert may still exist following construction.

Cost

Flood Control Basin: \$3.5M - \$4M (160 acre land acquisition, construction of a 15-acre lake with a 100-acre flood basin, impounding approx. 580 acre feet)

High Flow Bypass: \$700,000 (940LF of 5'x8' precast box culvert constructed in the existing public right-of-way)



1958 Flood Downtown

Recovery Value

HIGH

BUILD A COMMUNITY SAFE ROOM/SHELTER

Recovery Value

The construction of community safe rooms in Utica would protect the lives of residents and visitors during severe weather events.

Goal

Incorporate safe rooms into the construction of new municipal buildings, as appropriate, to provide designated shelter locations in severe weather events.

Project Description

Safe rooms are fully engineered structures designed to withstand the forces of high winds and debris impacts associated with severe weather events.

Options

Construct a Community Safe Room Downtown

A clearly designated community safe room located downtown would offer residents protection during severe weather events in the most actively utilized portion of town. The downtown rebuilding process offers an opportunity to incorporate the safe room into the design of any new public building which will reduce the per unit cost of the safe room. The inclusion of a safe room should be considered prior to the construction of a new Village Hall, the Township Community Building, new restrooms at the existing ball field, or through the reconstruction of the school building. Public access to the safe room, 24-hours a day, is essential.

Construct Multiple Community Safe Rooms

A greater level of protection will be provided during severe weather events if multiple safe rooms are built in the north and south portions of the community in addition to downtown. While safe rooms could be incorporated into the reconstruction of any new public buildings downtown, stand-alone safe rooms may be the only choice outside the downtown area, which would increase the per unit cost. Additional potential safe room locations include a Fire District building in the north portion of the community, and a municipal building located in the south portion of the Village. Each safe room must provide public access 24-hours a day.

Cost

Downtown Safe Room: \$75,000 (incremental cost of incorporating an 80-person, 400SF reinforced community safe room into the construction of a new municipal building)

Multiple Safe Rooms: \$100,000 (incremental cost of incorporating one 20-person, 100SF reinforced safe room into a new municipal building, and one stand alone 20-person, 100SF safe room built on a separate location)



Surviving Interior Rooms

Examples of surviving interior rooms found in structures destroyed by tornadoes.

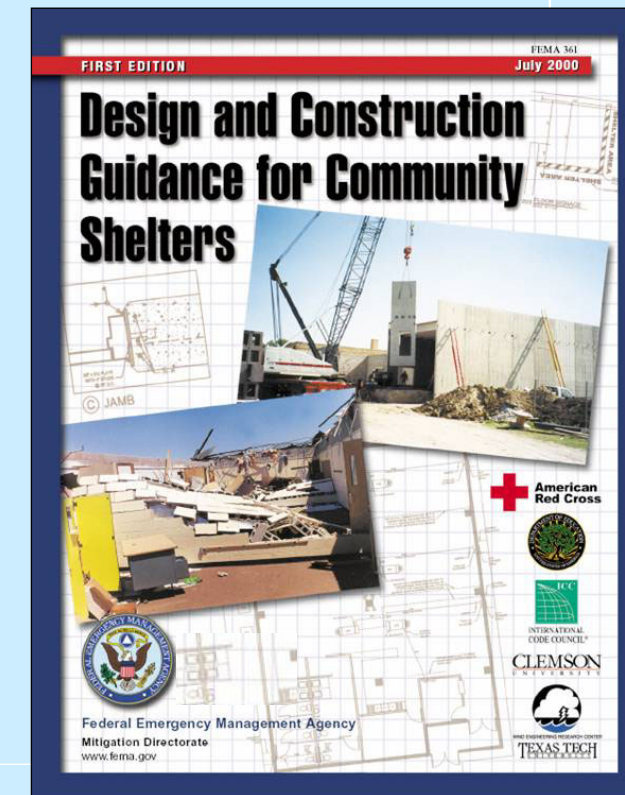


Paul Rasch
Region 3 Coordinator
Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA)

"Utica needs to have at least one safe room for the betterment of the community. Basements are still a good option, but not everyone has one. Whatever the cost, it is worth it to save lives. We should look for opportunity to add a safe room into one of the public buildings being reconstructed."



An example of a safe room design in accordance with FEMA guidelines



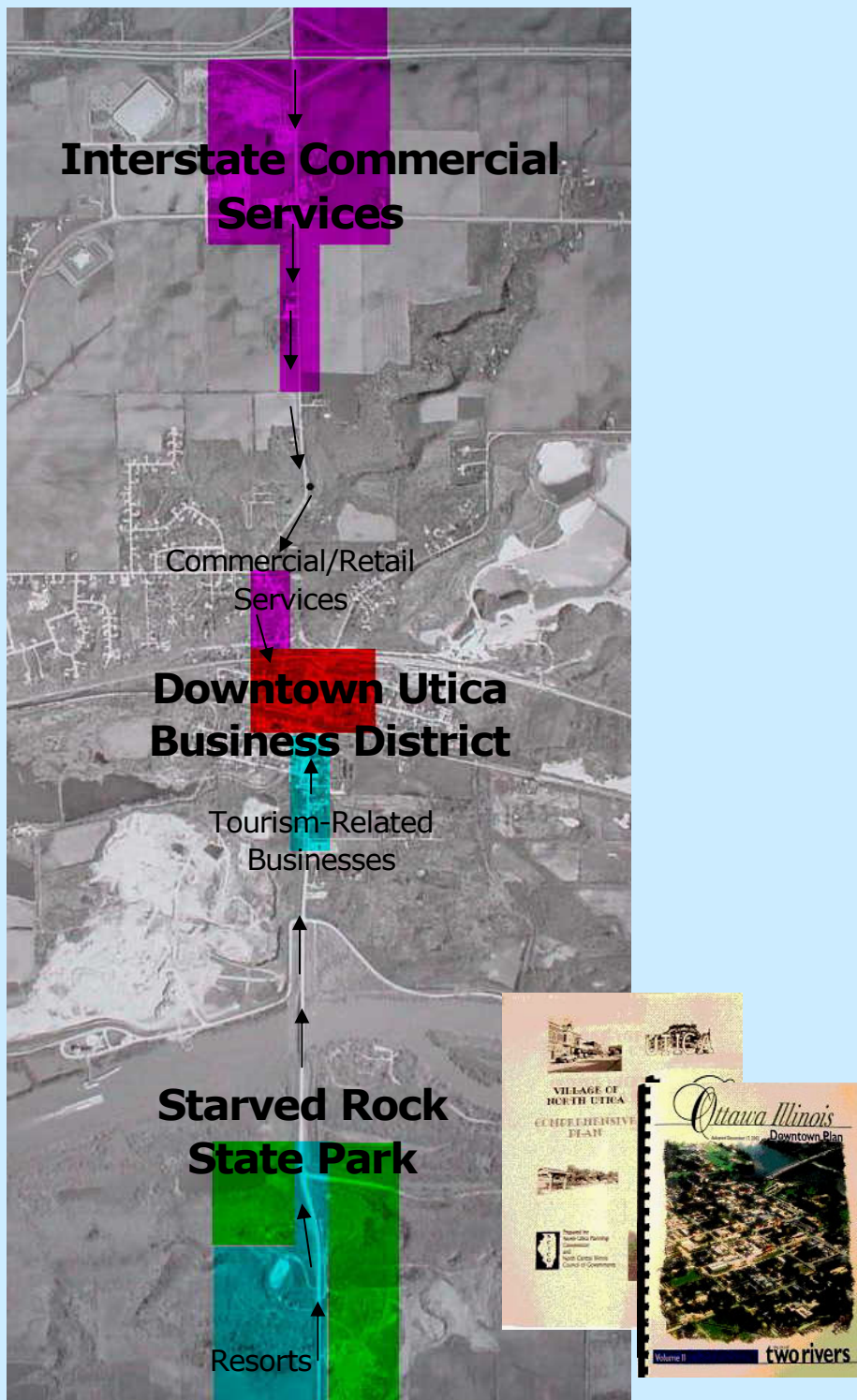
Recovery Value
HIGH

CREATE AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY



Mary Toraason
President
Business Association

“We have a great business community, but we could really benefit from having a strategy to help us maximize our market potential, and invite new investments and new entrepreneurs into Utica.”



An Economic Development Strategy and Downtown Plan would help guide future growth

Recovery Value

Devising a strategy to encourage new retail/commercial development will help to diversify and expand the local economic base. This is especially important downtown where there is a substantial amount of vacant land available for redevelopment due to tornado damage.

Goal

Promote new retail and commercial development by establishing adequate infrastructure, improving development standards, and providing appropriate business incentives.

Options

PLANNING

Develop an Economic Development Strategy and Market Analysis

Market conditions associated with tourism and potential growth segments/niches of the region will be analyzed to identify an approach for encouraging those markets in Utica. The economic development study will identify investment strategies that will broaden and enhance the local economy.

Prepare a Downtown Plan

A downtown development plan and public involvement strategy will include a charrette process, identify specific land uses, design guidelines, development regulations, parking strategies, and infrastructure needs, and will prioritize implementation projects to achieve the community’s vision for downtown Utica.

Create a Utica Municipal Code

A complete and updated Municipal Code will promote high quality and safe development standards within the Village. The Utica Municipal Code would include improvements to the existing zoning, stormwater, and signage regulations, and incorporate a new building code, subdivision ordinance, streetscape standards, and design guidelines.

PROGRAMS

Public/Private Partnerships

A Community Development Corporation (CDC), one type of public/private venture, would allow the Village to assemble properties to facilitate desired redevelopment, build infrastructure, and provide low-interest loans to applicants. Banks or other private benefactors typically help facilitate the development of a CDC by contributing funds that can be used for low-interest real estate or infrastructure loans that will revolve as loans are repaid.

Façade Improvement Program

A façade improvement program will provide incentives for existing businesses to improve storefronts and enhance the overall aesthetics of the downtown district. This program provides either low-interest loans or grants that match the owner’s personal investment in their storefront. Design guidelines with architectural and landscaping standards should assist individual businesses achieve design continuity.

Cost

Planning = \$150,000 (Economic Strategy \$40,000, Downtown Plan \$70,000, Municipal Code \$40,000)

Program = \$500,000 (CDC \$400,000, Façade Improvement \$100,000)

Recovery Value

HIGH

DEVELOP A MARKETING STRATEGY TO BETTER PROMOTE TOURISM

Recovery Value

Developing a marketing strategy, which when implemented in conjunction with appropriate signage, should lead to increased tourism in Utica, one of the Village’s primary economic drivers.

Goal

Strengthen the local economy by promoting existing Utica businesses, festivals, and area amenities, and understand how to take better advantage of the market potential of visitors to Starved Rock State Park. Encourage more/longer tourist visits and create new business opportunities for the area. Encourage travelers to visit with appealing signage and a recognizable vehicular “pathway”.

Planning Strategies

MARKETING

Prepare a Local Marketing/Tourism Strategy

Establish Utica’s target markets (i.e. Chicago, recreationists, families, etc.), consistent Village selling points, and develop promotional strategies to attract additional business. Creating a community “brand” will also enable the Village to differentiate itself from its neighbors, position itself with its target market, and project a revitalized image to potential tourists.

Prepare a Regional Marketing Strategy

Work with regional partners, including Starved Rock State Park, to develop a regional marketing strategy that will cross-promote each community within it.

Establish a Village Website

Build an official Utica website to serve both residents navigating for Village services and tourists searching for travel destinations.

SIGNAGE

Consistent, appealing signage at strategic locations along I-80 and I-39 should promote increased visitor traffic to Utica. Signage along Illinois Route 178 would also direct tourists to Utica’s commercial corridor and other destinations within the community. Development of a commercial sign ordinance would promote a consistent community image. In addition, coordination with regional leaders to improve existing signage leading to Starved Rock State Park from all communities will strengthen tourism in the entire region.

Cost

Local Marketing Strategy: \$45,000

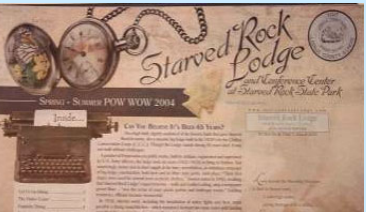
Regional Marketing Strategy: \$15,000 (Cost sharing with regional partners)

Village Website: \$15,000 (initial set up and 3 year maintenance cost)

Signage: \$25,000 (incl. 6 location signs or 2 location monuments)



Marketing brochures inform outsiders of area attractions



Appealing signage will attract visitors Downtown



Joe Hook
Owner
Grand Bear Lodge

“**S**tarved Rock State Park attracts 2.5 million visitors each year, most of which pass right through Utica. Let’s find a way to capitalize on our location, encourage longer stays, and provide more reasons to shop in the Village.”

Recovery Value
HIGH

RESTORE/ENHANCE THE I&M CANAL



Ana Koval
President
Canal Corridor
Association

“Our focus right now is to strengthen the canal connection between LaSalle and Utica. Improvements on the Utica end are the key, particularly finding a way to restore the water flow.”



Restoring water flow to the Canal would maximize its potential as a tourist attraction and recreational feature



Stagnant water promotes algae growth in the summer months and reduces the appeal of the I&M Canal in Utica

Recovery Value
MODERATE

Recovery Value

Capitalizing on the significant tourism potential of the I&M Canal is very important to the revitalization of downtown Utica. In its current condition – stagnant and covered with algae – the canal detracts from the appeal of the downtown area. Flowing water in the canal would create an attractive local feature for the residents of Utica, and a catalyst for increased tourism and economic development for the community and the region.

Goal

Restore year-round flowing water to the I&M canal through provision of a consistent water source.

Project Description

Provide the Utica section of the I&M canal with a constant source of water using either the Clark Run Creek or the Illinois River.

Options

Install a Pump Station to bring water to the Canal from the Illinois River

Supplying water from the Illinois River would provide a constant flow of water into the canal. This project would require placement of a pumping station on the north bank of the Illinois River, and a pipeline from the mouth of Clark Run Creek to the Canal. In addition to the construction cost, annual operating costs would be incurred to support the pump station.

Construct gravity flow pipe to divert waters from Clark Run Creek to the I&M Canal

Water could be provided to the canal through the construction of an inlet structure on Clark Run Creek south of the railroad bridge. The inlet would be designed to maintain minimum base flow in the creek; however, this option may not provide adequate flow to the canal during the late summer and early fall months. In addition, the environmental impacts on Clark Run Creek and the potential effects of high velocity flow into the canal would require further study. Drainage easements for the placement of the pipeline may be required.

Planning Project: A Regional Approach

Many of the communities along the I&M Canal are interested in restoring the canal within their jurisdiction. If a regional approach can be implemented, it would increase the potential economic benefits to all communities along the canal. Currently the Canal Corridor Association and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers are working toward a restoration project in nearby La Salle. A long-term goal of the Canal Corridor Association is to link Utica and La Salle to provide a continuous water feature to support tourism and recreation. A feasibility study could be completed to identify potential improvements and determine the needed steps for implementation.

Cost

Pump Station: \$560,000 for construction, \$30,000 for annual operating costs
(16" diameter pipeline to supply 3,000 gpm of flow to canal)

Gravity Pipe: \$240,000 for construction, no operating expense
(24" pipe with 8,000 gpm capacity & associated inlet structure)

Planning Project: \$100,000

PLAN FOR NEW HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL INCOME RANGES

Recovery Value

Even before the disaster, Utica had a relatively limited supply of housing for low-to-moderate income families, and having 59 homes damaged or destroyed by the tornado has only worsened the situation. A housing needs study would target new opportunities and identify approaches for providing a more diverse range of residential options.

Goal

Identify new housing options for all income ranges, family sizes, and seniors. Encourage an appropriate balance of mixed-income housing and a variety of residential product types in Utica that reflect changing demographic needs.

Options

Utica would greatly benefit from increasing the housing choices for a broader range of demographic types.

Planning: Housing Study

A housing study would devise a strategy to supplement Utica's existing residential base with an appropriate balance of mixed-income housing opportunities. The study would target alternatives that provide a mix of single and multi-family housing types by examining existing conditions, affordability, supply and demand, housing trends, and projected needs.

The study would also address projected housing needs by identifying development programs such as those provided under the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) or U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development to subsidize senior and low-to-moderate income housing costs.

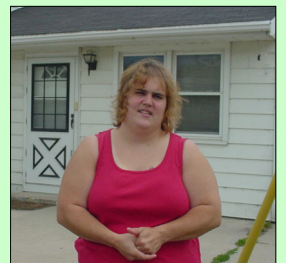
Utica's 2002 Comprehensive Plan could be amended to incorporate results of the study and improve prospects for long-term residential growth in Utica.

Higher density residential buildings provide additional housing options for area residents



Tom Guttilla
Planning Commissioner

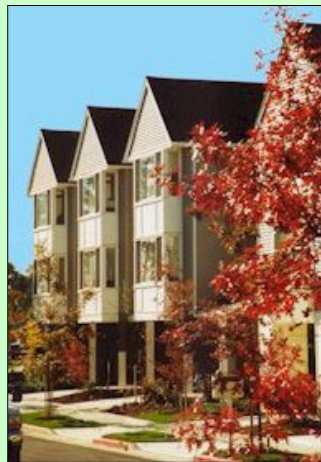
"**U**tica should make a broader range of housing choices available to our residents. We could really use more affordable housings to facilitate home ownership and quality rental housing"



Bonnie Lucas
Resident

"**T**here is no affordable housing in Utica right now. Absolutely nothing."

Town homes and duplexes are good examples of affordable housing



A well-balanced community contains both home ownership and rental opportunities

Cost
Planning = \$20,000

Recovery Value
MODERATE

DEVELOP A HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

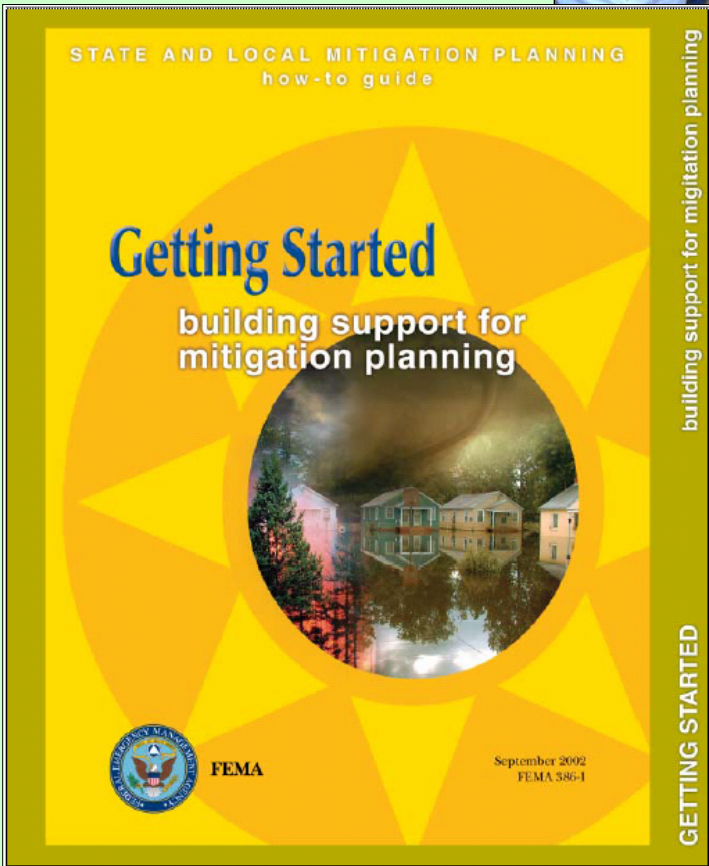


Ron Davis
Mitigation Specialist
Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA)

"There is a new program that allows communities like Utica to compete for hazard mitigation project funds, but you need to have a plan in place before you can even apply."



The mitigation planning process will allow the community to identify and assess vulnerabilities to all natural hazards



A FEMA approved mitigation plan will provide Utica the opportunity to compete for federal funds to implement long term measures to reduce vulnerabilities to natural hazard events

Recovery Value

The development of a Hazard Mitigation Plan is a prerequisite for project related funding under FEMA's Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program and Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. This allows communities to compete for approximately \$150 million annually to develop projects which reduce the impacts of disasters.

Goal

Complete a Hazard Mitigation Plan to assess the community's overall vulnerability to natural hazards and develop a strategy to reduce future losses.

Project Description

The preparation of a Hazard Mitigation Plan would include identification of all potential hazards that can occur in Utica and an analysis of its overall vulnerability to those hazards. Once the vulnerabilities have been identified, a mitigation strategy would be developed to identify specific measures that can be undertaken to reduce the potential for future losses. Currently, Utica is eligible to apply for a FEMA Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) grant to fund the completion of the plan. Applications for the PDM projects are solicited by FEMA, through the State of Illinois on an annual basis.

Options

Prepare a Hazard Mitigation Plan

The preparation of a hazard mitigation plan will allow Utica to better understand its vulnerability to all natural hazards and provide a strategy with specific mitigation measures to reduce future losses. The plan can be completed independently or as a part of a larger regional effort with LaSalle County and the North Central Illinois Council of Governments. Once the Hazard Mitigation Plan has been approved by FEMA, Utica will be eligible to receive Pre-Disaster Mitigation funds for projects like the construction of community safe rooms and/or the acquisition of flood prone properties.

Cost

Hazard Mitigation Plan: \$25,000

Recovery Value
MODERATE

VOLUNTARY BUYOUT PROGRAM FOR FLOOD PRONE RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES



The Voluntary Buyout Program offers owners of flood prone residential properties the opportunity and resources to relocate, and convert the flood prone area to open space



Recovery Value

Repetitively flooded properties are a source of direct economic losses to the community and can reduce the overall property value in the area.

Goal

Eliminate the potential for future flood damages to interested homeowners who live within the 100-year floodplain.

Project Description

Existing residential structures along Clark Run Creek and other flood prone areas have experienced repetitive flood damages, causing direct losses to property owners and tenants. The removal of these repetitively damaged properties could eliminate the potential for flood damages within the community, while providing additional open spaces for general public use.

Options

Voluntary Buy-Out Program for Flood Prone Residential Properties

A voluntary buyout program could be initiated to acquire residential properties along Clark Run Creek and elsewhere in the community within the 100-year floodplain. Homeowners who choose to participate would receive fair market value for their homes, and relocation assistance would be provided to ensure that funding is sufficient to secure comparable housing in the area. The existing structures would be demolished and deed restrictions would be placed on the properties to require open space use.

Cost

Voluntary Buyout Program: \$200,000 - \$450,000
(Cost depends on the number of homeowners participating)



Judy Van Buren
Resident

“Others might see it as a mobile home, but to me, it is still my home.”

Note: Participation in this type of program to relocate residences out of the floodplain with federal or state funds is strictly voluntary.

Recovery Value
MODERATE

EVALUATE/UPGRADE UTILITY SYSTEMS



Rick Maltas
Superintendent
Utica Public Works Dept.

“**W**e should start thinking about future utility system improvements right now, so that we can start planning ahead and figuring out how to pay for them.”



Recovery Value
MODERATE

Recovery Value

An adequate and reliable utility system is critical to meeting existing user demands and to support/attract future development.

Goal

Assess the need for utility system improvements/expansions and upgrade the condition of the water distribution, sanitary sewer, and storm sewer systems by correcting existing deficiencies and increase the overall system capacity, as necessary.

Project Description

Utica’s utility system is generally functional in its current condition; however, the rebuilding process should include an assessment of the adequacy of its condition, capacity, and reliability to meet expectations of current residents as well as projected future demands. Many of the water mains in the community are aged and deteriorating, resulting in frequent ruptures. The existing system configuration does not provide adequate water pressure to the northern portions of the community. Additionally, the technology utilized at the wastewater treatment plant is relatively outdated. System upgrades should be carefully considered based on conditions found to be deficient and/or the need to expand the capability of the system.

Options

Utility System Assessment

Conduct a feasibility study to identify specific aspects of the existing water distribution, sanitary sewer, and storm water systems that are in need of upgrade to meet the demands of anticipated future development. This analysis should investigate the need for and feasibility of improvements to the equipment or technology utilized in the existing system, as well as expansion of the geographic coverage of each system.

Water and Sewer System Upgrades

A variety of upgrades for the existing water system may be needed upon completion of the system assessment. Key water system improvements could include installing emergency generators at the well pump houses and construction of a new 250,000-gallon water tower. Sewer upgrades may include expansion of the treatment plant and overall system coverage. These upgrades would increase reliability and function of the system and support current needs and future development. Improvements may be prioritized and completed in stages if needed.

Cost

Utility System Assessment: \$15,000

Water System Improvements: \$1,700,000 (installing emergency manual diesel generators at well pump houses, construction of a new 250,000-gallon elevated water tank, construction of an additional 450 gpm water supply well, 2 miles of water main replacements at \$50/LF, and water service extensions)

Sewer System: \$370,000 (construction of a new lift station at I-80, and extension of service into unserved portions of the community)

PHYSICALLY TIE UTICA TOGETHER FROM I-80 TO STARVED ROCK STATE PARK

Recovery Value

Tying the community together, both physically and visually, via an improved and connected pathway system would improve mobility for residents and visitors.

Goal

Use an interconnected series of pathways to enhance non-vehicular transportation throughout the community.

Project Description

Extending bicycle and pedestrian paths from Starved Rock State Park through downtown Utica to I-80 will improve local connectivity and facilitate stronger links throughout Utica’s commercial corridor and Utica’s various residential areas such as Senica Manor, Ridgeview Estates, and Oak Bluff Estates. It would also facilitate visits by cyclists and other recreationists to the area, and improve the quality of life for all residents.

Options

Connected Pathway System

Utilize existing highways and streets to establish bicycle paths where sufficient shoulder widths are available for a bike lane or where sufficient right-of-way will allow for development of a separate bike path. Major new highway and street construction projects, such as the realignment of Illinois Route 178, should include dedicated bike lanes whenever possible. Depending upon funding availability, the lanes/paths can be either paved or unpaved.

Renovation of Railroad Trestle for Bike/Pedestrian path

An additional crossing over the I&M Canal would improve non-motorized transportation connectivity. Renovation of the existing railroad trestle west of the Mill Street bridge would connect the neighborhood to the south with the ballpark. In addition, this renovation would put a bridge of historic character back into functional use.

Cost				
Routes	Miles	Bike Lane	Gravel Trail	Paved Trail
A	2	\$105,600	\$158,400	\$316,800
B	2	\$105,600	\$158,400	\$316,800
C	1.75	\$92,400	\$138,600	\$277,200
D	1.75	\$92,400	\$138,600	\$277,200
E	2	\$105,600	\$158,400	\$316,800

*Cost of Trestle renovation to be determined after structural assessment



Rudy Pamintuan
Michelle Rene Baert
Entrepreneurs

“Tying in the community with bike trails will encourage shoppers and visitors to downtown Utica and create an amenity within our community for more family activities.”

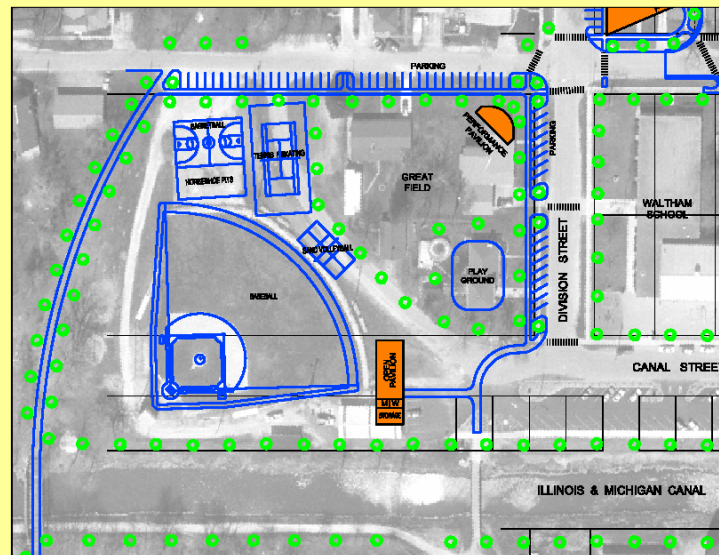
Recovery Value
COMMUNITY
INTEREST

EXPAND THE BALL FIELD & ADD NEW FEATURES TO THE PARK



Alex Alleman
Pitcher/First Base
Utica Little League

"I hope they don't forget the kids. There is only one ball field, and we would like to have some more room to practice and play other sports like soccer."



Note: This is only a conceptual design of an expanded park intended for the Village of North Utica to consider. Designations made herein are entirely conceptual and should not be viewed as specific to any particular piece of property.

Recovery Value

Expanding the amount of green/open spaces and adding new facilities for recreational and leisure activities in the park will increase Utica's attractiveness to residents and visitors.

Goal

Restore and expand Carey Memorial park beyond the baseball field to the SW corner of Division and Church Streets; construct additional facilities in the park for recreational and leisure activities.

Project Description

Carey Memorial Park, located between Church and Canal Streets, and west of Division Street, is the community's primary recreational facility, offering a baseball field, a playground, park benches, a concession stand, and a picnic shelter with six picnic tables. The concession stand, storage shed, the ball field, and some benches and lights were damaged by the tornado.

Options

Restore Carey Memorial Park

One option for quickly restoring green space and the ball field to public use is to only repair or replace items that were damaged during the disaster. This would include restoring the damaged ball field, lighting, dugouts and other facilities, as well as vacuuming the field to remove small debris. The cost and time needed for this option would be limited to the damaged items only.

Expand Carey Memorial Park

Another option is to expand the Carey Memorial Park by acquiring residential property north of the ball field up to the SW corner of Division and Church Streets. This would include redesigning the park to include additional facilities for recreational and leisure activities. These facilities could include a soccer field, a new basketball court and a new tennis court at the northwestern side of the new park, a new performance pavilion at the northeastern corner, an enlarged picnic shelter in the southeastern end, and public restrooms around the perimeter. The expanded park would require acquisition of three properties.

Cost

Restore Carey Park: \$200,000

(Incl. replacement of field lighting, bathroom, storage-shed, and concession stand)

Expand Carey Park: \$500,000

(Incl. acquisition of three properties, site improvements, and new performance pavilion)

Recovery Value
**COMMUNITY
INTEREST**

RESTORE THE UTICA TRAIN DEPOT

Recovery Value

Although the Train Depot was not considered to be a significant historic property, the loss of several key historic structures due to the tornado may have marginally increased its heritage value to the community.

Goal

Rehabilitate the Train Depot to preserve a local landmark that could potentially have some commercial and/or historic value to the community.

Project Description

The Chicago Rock Island & Pacific Railroad built the existing Utica Train Depot. Now one of the oldest surviving buildings constructed by the railroad, the depot maintains a modest amount of community interest despite its significant state of disrepair, including tornado damage. The building could be restored with sufficient funding. However, the current owner - CSX railroad - will require the building to be relocated out of their right-of-way as a condition of sale/transfer.

Options

Acquisition and restoration of the Train Depot

This could be accomplished by either a public or private entity; however, a purpose and site for the building should first be identified. The requirement to relocate the depot off the CSX right-of-way is a significant complication and cost consideration.

Cost

To be determined – with the overall cost driven by relocation considerations



Train Depot after the disaster.



Train Depot pre-disaster



Bo Windy
Utica Historian

“**W**e lost 15-18 historical buildings to the tornado—which is huge for a town our size—we should make every attempt to keep the ones we have.”

RELOCATE/EXPAND FIRE STATION



Mike Payne
Trustee
U.C.F.P.D. Board

“**W**e want to provide the best possible fire protection service for the entire Village. There are several good options to look at before we make a final decision.”



Existing Fire District facility



Expanded multi-bay fire stations

Recovery Value

An expanded fire station may be warranted as the redevelopment of the Village proceeds.

Goal

Construct a new fire station outside of the 500-year floodplain.

Project Description

Build a new fire station for the Utica Community Fire Protection District (U.C.F.P.D.) consolidating all Fire District operations, equipment and vehicles in one facility located outside of the floodplain.

Options

Expanded Fire & Ambulance Station

The U.C.F.P.D. fire suppression and emergency medical services personnel and equipment have been operating out of two separate locations. The ambulance garage housed emergency medical response and the fire station provided fire suppression response. Building a new, six-bay fire station would combine fire suppression and emergency medical services in one new expanded fire station, built outside of the 500-year floodplain.

Fire and emergency medical services combined at one location would centralize Fire District operations. Building maintenance and personnel administration issues would be centralized reducing associated expenses. The risk of flooding would be reduced or eliminated. However, the community has expressed concern that a single, expanded station north of the Village would increase response times to the downtown, Illinois River and Starved Rock Park areas.

The viability of this option could eventually increase with the progressive expansion of business and residential development within the community and the immediate surrounding area served by the U.C.F.P.D.

Utica Elevator – Warehouse Property

Build a new, expanded Fire Station on the Utica Elevator warehouse property. This building-site is outside of the 500-year floodplain and has sufficient space for an expanded Fire Station, if properly reconfigured. Utilizing this property would allow commercial development of the current downtown Fire Station location. The availability of the property and the cost to acquire the property remains to be determined.

Cost

Consolidated Fire & Ambulance Station: \$1,085,000

(Land acquisition, site improvement, & construction of a new code-compliant building)

Recovery Value
**COMMUNITY
INTEREST**

Conceptual Utica Land Use Map

Note: This map is intended to identify some potential land use changes for the Village of North Utica to consider. These designations are entirely conceptual and should not be viewed as specific to any particular piece of property.

